Upgradation of State Highways into National Highways in Tamil Nadu

318. SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal has been submitted by the Tamil Nadu Government for upgradation of State Highways into National Highways;

(b) if so, whether approval has been accorded by the Centre alongwith the financial allocation; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) to (c) All proposals for declaration of state roads as National Highways in Tamil Nadu have been returned to the State Government in June, 2002 for review based on the revised criteria for declaration of new National Highways. Presently, there is a ban on declaration of new National Highways, due to fund constraints. The Government may however, consider declaration of very limited lengths of a few State Highways as National Highways during the course of the 10th Five Year Plan keeping in view the traffic needs, *inter-se* priority and availability of funds, after the ban is lifted.

Amendment in Motor Vehicles Act

319. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested the Central Government to amend the Motor Vehicles Act to ensure strict punishment, including cancellation of driving licence in accident cases;

(b) whether the number of road accidents has increased manifold during the last three years; and

(c) if so, Government's response in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) No, Sir.